

## Twistgrip

THIRTY-TWO stalwart Brimbo machines met together on Sunday for the annual Bressingham/Fornett gala outing. Virtually every British manufacturer of repute was represented.

There were four immaculate Ariel Leader and Arrow twins, a sample of almost every post-war BSA ever made, namely a C12 250 a B31 350cc, two Gold Star 500's, two A10 650's, even a diminutive Bantam / Vincent hybrid and not forgetting Harry Womack's famous M20 side valve of unknown vintage.

There were at least five big Matchless singles, a brace of 650 Nortons, a Triton special, and several modern 750 and 850 Commandos. Naturally there were countless Triumph Bonneville's of assorted shapes and sizes as well as a 200cc Tiger Cub (ridden by pretty Ann Smith). Another intrepid Brimbo lady rider Val Peacock arrived on her scarlet Royal Enfield Crusader which contrasted vividly with the other "oily" Enfield present — this time an elderly side valve attached to a hand-crafted aluminium sports sidecar.

No Brimbo list would be complete without mentioning a Velocette or two, and finally our erstwhile leader and chairman Dr Pat Rawlence on his peagreen Sunbeam shaft-driven S7.

We journeyed in thunderous convoy down to the Scole Inn for lunch where we collected a few late comers, and from there on to

Bressingham. Japanese motorcycles visibly wilted in the gutters as we thumped and roared onwards.

Needless to say, visitors already at Bressingham were suitably amazed (and aghast?) at the extra attractions not listed in the guide books.

At 3.45 another roll call and the column forged its way on to Fornett St Mary where the Francis family have created, virtually single-handed, an industrial steam engine museum.

As a chilly breeze had set up and the sun had disappointed for a while, the warmth of the engine shed as well as the refreshments provided by the Francis family were especially inviting to cold Brimbo bodies. Sated with tea, cake and steam engines we started to drift off homewards from 5.30 onwards, happy and content after a superb day's entertainment — and eagerly awaiting Monday's vintage bike racing at Snetterton.

The reverberating sound of stretched-to-the-limit Manx and International Nortons, FR AJS's, Matchless G50's, BSA Gold Stars, Rudge Ulsters, KTT Velocettes and Grand Prix Triumphs evoked the memories of all lovers of British motorcycles. Monday's racing saw every sort of machine imaginable dicing around the famous circuit, from the exotica above to "lesser" machinery like Sunbeams, Panther Zeniths and Ariels.

The star of the track was Steve Lindsdell from

Westoning who, with beautifully prepared Royal Enfields (a 350 single and a 700 twin) completely dominated the rest of the field in every race he entered. What he has done to these bikes to make them so fast and reliable he's keeping to himself, but a lot of people with FR's, Gold Stars and Manx's wish he'd let them into the secret.

Many of the machines present were totally unsuitable for racing, a 250 C11 BSA and a standard 1946 Matchless 500 being prime examples, and many of the older vintage machines required considerable strength and courage to make them handle at racing speeds. Yet they were all out there, giving their best. The friendly atmosphere in the pits, the sight of local man Dick Aldous showing the way round to men one third his age, the cut and thrust dicing on some of the corners, the sight of priceless rare machines being thrashed to the absolute limit (just as their makers intended 20, 30, 40 and even 50 years ago) ... the list is endless!

The wind at Snetterton was its usual marrow chilling self; but we at Brimbo had a really warm time. Roll on next year.

Next week, a report on the Brimbo hazardous camping weekend at the British Motorcycle Federation's rally at Peterborough, possibly the biggest and best motorcycle rally in Europe.

Tony Trevall.

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